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WORLD MOHAIR PRODUCTION AND TRADE

Summary

World mohair production is estimated to have declined over 50 percent from 61.8 million pounds during the 1961-65 period to 29.1 million pounds in 1973. The sharpest decline occurred in the United States, which is estimated to have produced 10 million pounds in 1973, compared with an average of 29 million during 1961-65. Turkey is estimated to have produced 11 million pounds in 1973 and the Republic of South Africa had estimated production of 6.1 million pounds.

Despite falling production during the 1960's, world exports of mohair in 1972 increased sharply. Exports of 34.6 million pounds included 19.3 million pounds of U.S. mohair, a large amount of which originated from sales of mohair stored from previous years' production.

Production

A variety of problems have beset world mohair production during the past several years. In the leading producing nations—the United States, Turkey, and South Africa—the combined production fell from the 1961-65 average of 61.8 million pounds to 33.1 million pounds, grease basis, in 1972 and is estimated to have fallen further to 29.1 million pounds in 1973. The one common thread in this worldwide decline in mohair production is the adverse price structure which existed in the 1960's and which finally reversed itself, with a vengeance, in 1972.

United States

U.S. production of grease mohair topped out at 32.4 million pounds in 1965 and has declined each year since. Production in 1972 fell to 10.5 million pounds. It was anticipated that the sharply higher prices of mohair experienced in 1972 and in 1973 would reverse the fall in Angora goat numbers. However, several unusually severe snowfalls and freezes in Texas, which produces 95 percent of U.S. mohair, caused high death losses in the flocks and production is estimated to have declined to 10 million pounds in 1973.

Industry sources indicate that the main cause of the decline in the size of the U.S. Angora flock was the low price level for mohair during most of the 1960's. Other reasons include the increasing cost of labor, resurgence of the predator problem, and alternate uses of land for purposes such as cattle raising and hunting. Also, with higher revenues from cattle raising, oil rights, hunting permits, and other sources, many large ranchers have chosen to cease production of mohair.

Despite these factors, with the market price of mohair in early 1974 six to seven times higher than the 30 cents per pound received by producers in 1971, it is expected that flocks will expand and production increase in 1974 (incentive payments under the Wool Act effectively place a floor of 80.2 cents per pound under the producer price of mohair).

Turkey

Production of grease mohair rose to a high point of 22.6 million pounds in 1959, held at 18 to 21 million pounds during most of the 1960's and then declined sharply to an estimated 11 million pounds in 1973. Low prices were largely to blame for reduction in flock size and declining production. The Government of Turkey is trying to encourage mohair production to earn foreign exchange and support prices for some grades of mohair have been increased 70 percent. This, and the higher prices received for mohair in the current strong market, should lead to increased production in 1974.

South Africa

After reaching a production peak of 14 million pounds of grease mohair in 1966, output fell to an estimated 6.1 million pounds in 1973. A combination of low prices, labor problems, and a severe drought in 1972 and 1973 led to the decline. Although higher prices will act as an incentive to production, it is too early to predict whether South African production will return to more normal levels.

Lesotho (formerly Basutoland) is an independent country in southern Africa which produces about 2 million pounds of mohair per year. Export data of the Republic of South Africa include the mohair exports of Lesotho.

Trade

Between 1969 and 1972, about 75 percent of the world's mohair production entered the export market. In 1972, these exports reached 34.6 million pounds—actually exceeding world production of 33.1 million pounds. On a greasy weight basis trade would be somewhat higher since the export figures are partially composed of the lighter scoured mohair. The high rate of export reflects the export of mohair stocks held from earlier years.

United States

U.S. mohair exports rose to a new high of 19.3 million pounds in 1972. Of this amount 15.5 million pounds—80 percent of the total—were exported to the United Kingdom. Italy was the second most important purchaser, taking 1.5 million pounds. France and West Germany followed with 0.6 million pounds each.

Turkey

The bulk of Turkey's mohair production continues to be consumed by domestic industry. In 1972 Turkey exported 5.7 million pounds—46 percent of domestic production. The largest buyer of Turkish mohair has been the USSR, which took 1.9 million pounds in 1972. The other two major customers were the United Kingdom, which bought 1.7 million pounds and France which took 1.5 million pounds, largely for its important spinning mills which produce 100 percent mohair yarn for Europe's plush industry.

South Africa

Very little mohair is consumed domestically in South Africa and Lesotho. Their combined exports amounted to 9.6 million pounds in 1972. The United Kingdom was the major market, accounting for 4.2 million pounds. Italy followed with 1.7 million pounds. Japan took 1 million pounds and France and Spain bought 0.9 million pounds each.

United Kingdom

The textile industry concentrated around Bradford, England, dominates the world's trade in mohair. Producing no grease mohair, the United Kingdom is completely dependent on imports. In 1972 it imported 27.2 million pounds of mohair in response to surging demand. Although precise import figures are not available, the United States was the major supplier of mohair, followed by South Africa with Turkey a distant third.

The Bradford traders and manufacturers are engaged in all facets of mohair commerce. They scour and comb imported grease mohair, spin yarn, and weave cloth. They also export some grease mohair and sell scoured mohair, mohair top, and finished mohair textiles and clothing in the world markets.

Japan

Japan's imports of mohair rose in 1972 to 1.6 million pounds from 1 million pounds the previous year. The largest supplier was South Africa. Total imports were down substantially from the 1961-65 average of 4.2 million pounds, largely because of phasing out scouring and combing operations. Not reflected in these data, however, are the substantial Japanese imports of mohair top and mohair fabric, largely from European manufacturers.

Table 1--Mohair: Production in specified countries,
greasy basis, 1961-65 average, annual 1969-72

Year	:	:	:	:	:	:
	:	United	:	:	Republic	:
	:	States	:	:	of South	:
	:	<u>1/</u>	:	Turkey	Africa <u>2/</u>	Lesotho
	:	:	:	:	:	Total
-----Million pounds-----						
Average:	:					
1961-65	:	29.0	19.4	11.4	2.0	61.8
Annual:	:					
1969	:	20.8	16.6	11.3	2.2	50.9
1970	:	18.7	15.0	9.2	2.2	45.1
1971	:	15.0	13.8	9.4	1.8	40.0
1972	:	10.5	12.5	8.1	---	33.1
1973 <u>3/</u>	:	10.0	11.0	6.1	---	29.1

1/ Year beginning April 1.

2/ Year beginning July 1.

3/ Estimated.

Table 2--Mohair: Exports from specified countries, actual weight,
1961-65 average, annual 1969-72

Year	:	:	:	:
	:	United	:	Republic
	:	States <u>1/</u>	Turkey	of South
	:	:	:	Africa <u>2/</u>
	:	:	:	Total
-----Million pounds-----				
Average:	:			
1961-65	:	10.3	10.9	12.3
	:			33.5
Annual:	:			
1969	:	12.9	6.7	12.6
1970	:	10.9	4.5	10.0
1971	:	12.4	5.5	10.7
1972	:	19.3	5.7	9.6
	:			34.6
	:			
	:			

1/ Clean content.

2/ Includes Lesotho.

1/
Table 3--Mohair: U.S. exports by country of destination,
clean basis, 1961-65 average, annual 1969-72

Country of destination	Average 1961-65	1969	1970	1971	1972
-----Thousand pounds-----					
United Kingdom	5,064	8,366	7,517	9,205	15,548
Italy	572	1,902	766	422	1,480
Japan	1,362	438	615	239	337
Belgium	1,174	511	282	299	45
Germany, West	187	169	178	385	632
Switzerland	263	489	487	771	194
Netherlands	1,154	201	141	28	61
Spain	45	149	126	194	105
France	42	313	341	561	639
Mexico	218	152	178	129	119
Canada	156	120	146	84	141
Other countries	49	70	117	108	17
Total	10,286	12,880	10,894	12,425	19,318
Percent of production	44	61	61	83	2/

1/ Includes other wool-like specialty hair.

2/ U.S. exports exceeded production in 1972 because of heavy stock withdrawal from U.S. warehouses.

Table 4--Turkey: Exports of mohair by country of destination,
actual weight, 1961-65 average, annual 1969-72

Country of destination	Average 1961-65	1969	1970	1971	1972
-----Thousand pounds-----					
USSR	290	2,414	2,081	3,179	1,867
Hungary	657	264	84	29	---
United Kingdom	5,875	2,083	972	496	1,656
Czechoslovakia	492	231	68	---	271
Poland	349	384	395	128	176
Germany, East	117	209	42	---	---
Yugoslavia	204	152	---	---	---
Romania	178	73	33	---	79
Bulgaria	293	128	40	---	55
Israel	220	---	---	---	---
France	985	271	551	1,631	1,541
Italy	208	66	22	---	64
Other countries	1,009	414	170	4	8
Total	10,877	6,689	4,458	5,467	5,717

1/
Table 5--Republic of South Africa: Exports of mohair by country
of destination, actual weight, 1961-65, annual 1969-72

Country of destination	Average 1961-65	1969	1970	1971	1972
-----Thousand pounds-----					
United Kingdom	6,518	5,551	4,755	4,904	4,167
Italy	1,518	2,845	1,284	1,908	1,715
Japan	1,875	839	837	859	983
Spain	374	1,554	1,469	729	875
France	533	712	471	833	922
Belgium	469	55	161	86	18
Other countries	990	1,035	984	1,371	881
Total	12,277	12,591	9,961	10,690	9,561

1/ Includes Lesotho.

Table 6--United Kingdom: Imports of mohair by country of origin,
1961-65 average, annual 1969-72

Country of origin	: :Average :1961-65	: : 1969	: : 1970	: : 1971	: : 1972
	:	:	:	:	:
	: -----Thousand pounds-----				
Turkey	: 7,389	: 3,063	: 1,445	: 483	
South Africa, Republic of	: 6,795	: 5,387	: 4,646	: 4,583	
United States	: 6,798	: 12,047	: 8,643	: 9,716	
Other countries	: 1,075	: 930	: 651	: 586	
Total	: 22,057	: 21,427	: 15,385	: 15,368	<u>1/</u> 27,231
	:	:	:	:	:

1/ Country breakdown not available.

Table 7--Japan: Imports of mohair by country of origin,
actual weight, 1961-65 average, annual 1969-72

Country of origin	Average 1961-65	1969	1970	1971	1972
-----Thousand pounds-----					
South Africa, Republic of ...	1,887	807	780	586	1,177
United States	1,649	518	644	390	428
United Kingdom	450	49	4	2	---
Other countries	214	30	18	1	7
Total	4,200	1,404	1,446	979	1,612

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